

MEDIA ALERT: NPR to feature GVSU New Music Ensemble on Sunday

February 1, 2008

For immediate release

Contact: Mary Isca Pirkola, GVSU News & Information Services
(616) 331-2221.

ALLENDALE, Mich. - Grand Valley State University's New Music Ensemble will be featured on National Public Radio's *Weekend Edition Sunday* on February 3. The program airs in West Michigan on WGVU AM & FM at 8 a.m. Check your local listings for other airing times and stations.

Under the direction of composition professor Bill Ryan, GVSU's New Music Ensemble has the critics' blogs on fire and download sites keeping busy. Focused on their stellar performance of Steve Reich's "Music for 18 Musicians," the buzz began when critics sat at attention during the ensemble's 5 a.m. performance of this piece at the prestigious Bang on a Can music marathon in New York City in June, 2007.

The attention and praise has escalated following the October, 2007 release of the ensemble's CD, recorded over three long, grueling days in the Royce Auditorium of St. Cecilia's Music Society in Grand Rapids.

The track has been among the most popular downloads (of any kind) from Amazon.com. Ryan has been trying to keep up with the online explosion of praise for the CD and posting them on the group's own Web page, newmusicensemble.org.

A recent Google search of the GVSU NME resulted in over 2,000 sites. There have been reviews and mentions in many blogs, some by critics, some by everyday folks. Newspaper coverage has included reviews in *The New York Times*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *The Minnesota Daily*, *L.A. Weekly*, among others.

When the 2007 year-end lists came out, the news could hardly be better:

- *L.A. Weekly*-Best Classical Events of 2007
- *Time Out New York*-Top Ten Classical CDs of 2007
- *San Jose Mercury News*-Top Ten Classical CDs of 2007
- *The Rest Is Noise*--Top Ten CDs of 2007
- *The New York Times*-2007 Most Notable Classical CDs
- *New York Magazine*-2007 Top Ten Stories in Classical Music
- *Rhapsody* Editorial Staff-Top Ten Classical CDs of 2007
- *Washington Post*-Top Ten Classical CDs of 2007
- *Calgary Herald*-Best Tunes of 2007
- In addition, the CD was the runaway winner of the WNYC Soundcheck Listener Poll for Top 2007 Classical CD.

For more information, contact Bill Ryan, GVSU New Music Ensemble director at (616) 331-3087.